



Elements Outdoor Learning - Encouraging Positive Behaviour Procedure

At Elements Outdoor Learning, we strive to create a nurturing and safe environment in which children feel empowered and free to learn and play in a way that inspires creativity and develops a lifelong passion for learning. Our vision of children and staff forming deep connections within friendships circles and the natural environment around them, whilst laughing and learning, playing and growing emotionally, personally and socially has encouraged us to examine how we can foster these ideals and values and ensure our vision comes to fruition.

We believe children should be treated fairly, with respect and without any form of discrimination. That children, like adults, should be able to express themselves confidently through a range of modalities, within safe boundaries, and be given opportunities to grow and develop their skills in an holistic way, developing care for others and respecting the environment. Therefore, at Elements, staff will focus on 6 key areas of positive behaviour management whilst working with the children in their care.

1. **Modelling** – During interactions with children throughout the sessions, staff understand that modelling the behaviours that portray the ethos of our company is of great importance. We want to foster a caring, kind, considerate and compassionate environment and, by modelling these values, we believe that the children will learn from us and follow suit.
2. **Positive enforcement of behaviours** – As well as modelling behaviours, staff will be vigilant of how the children in our care are interacting with each other and the woodland. We believe that it is important for children to experience praise from adults and their peers when they show the types of behaviour that promote and cultivate a caring and fun learning environment.
3. **Clear rules and boundaries** – At Elements, we encourage children to choose activities related to their interests as well as to play freely with their peers within the woodland. Although risk assessments will have been carried out for the site and boundaries and safety procedures shared with the children, we believe that creating collaborative ground rules for each group is important. Children will therefore have the responsibility of ownership and be accountable for their actions. All ground rules will be created with a positive spin starting with 'do' rather than 'do not'

4. Being fair and consistent – It is of utmost importance to us that group rules are followed fairly and consistently by children and adults. Children will always know where they stand, will understand the limits to their behaviours thus strengthening the trust and bonds within the group. We understand that by changing the rules or limits, children can become very confused and feel frustration.
5. Activity Planning – Staff at Elements will work hard at ensuring activities planned and set up are suitable for the children in each group whilst focusing on activities that require sharing, negotiation and co-operation. Care will be taken to provide the right level of challenge to engage children, developing their focus and curiosity. Observations will allow staff to develop and plan sessions that spark the children's interests, facilitate their learning, encourage investigations and to ask significant questions that help children to think more deeply.
6. Self-Learning – The nature of outdoor learning is an ideal opportunity for children to learn how some behaviours will impact on themselves. We believe that it is important for children to have autonomy over their choices, within safe boundaries, and to learn from them, especially when they are not the most sensible. We like to use the formula $E+R=O$, meaning the event plus the response leads to the outcome. Staff at Elements will encourage children to think about their desired outcomes and facilitate them to decide on the response(s) they would need to foster in order to be successful.

We believe that by following these 6 golden rules, we can create a safe and caring learning environment in which children feel valued and confident in themselves. We believe that children will develop a greater connection to the core elements and better understand our responsibilities towards nature. We believe that Elements Outdoor Learning will be successful in providing unique learning opportunities to children, inspired by the natural environment, focussed on social and emotional wellbeing, growth and enjoyment through meaningful connections to each other and the natural elements.

However, we also understand that in some instances children will require time and space to release any pent up and unwanted energy. Staff will be on hand to aid children in expressing their emotions and finding suitable solutions or offering suggestions that may help children to release their energy, such as transferring it to a stone or a nearby tree. Any clear needs of the child will be addressed, such as drinking water, eating, taking layers off to cool down or having a quiet story together to name a few. Once a child has calmed down and is showing signs they are ready to have a discussion, staff will mediate and help children to process the issues and develop strategies to help prevent recurrences of unwelcomed situations. At the end of the day, children and staff will have the opportunity to discuss as a group any issues that require attention and review the impact that behaviours had on one another. This way, children will have the opportunity to learn from their experiences as well as being reminded of their group rules. Praise will be given to children who showed behaviours which reflected the ethos of the group and children will be encouraged to think of situations experienced within the sessions that require celebrating.